

Remarks

Claims 1-7 are in the case. Claims 1-6 remain the same. Claim 7 is a new claim; basis for new Claim 7 is found in the application as filed at page 9, lines 22-24.

We turn now to the rejections.

Claims 1, 2 and 4 are rejected under the judicially created doctrine of obviousness as being unpatentable over Claims 1 and 2 of U.S. Patent No. 6,716,445. Enclosed is a terminal disclaimer and associated fee. Reconsideration is requested.

Claims 1-5 are rejected as anticipated by Won et al under 35 U.S.C. 102(e). No patent number is recited. No Won patent is listed in the PTO-892. Three Won patents are listed in the PTO-1449, namely 6,388,047; 6,583,219; and 6,592,895. Reconsideration is requested. 35 U.S.C. 102(e) is not met because the requirement therein of "by another" is not met. This is because, for each of the three patents, the inventorship is the same as for the instant application.

Claims 1-3 and 5 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(e) as being anticipated by Zhong et al U.S. Patent No. 6,368,356. Claims 1-6 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being obvious over Zhong et al U.S. Patent No. 6,368,356. The rejection relies especially on disclosure in Zhong at column 4, lines 51-57 of a blend of "alginic acid and polyvinyl alcohol".

Reconsideration is requested. The claims require a hydrophilic polymer which is a modified polysaccharide (modification is that hydroxy groups are reacted with unsaturated group introducing compound) and of hydrophobic macromer. None of these requirements are met by Zhong. The alginic acid of Zhong is a polysaccharide but it is not hydrophilic and is not modified by reaction of hydroxy groups with unsaturated group introducing compound. The polyvinyl alcohol is not hydrophobic since it is water-soluble and is not a macromer and is not a

polysaccharide. Moreover, there is no suggestion or motivation in Zhong et al to depart from what it teaches, to provide the hydrogel forming system and hydrogel of the claims herein.

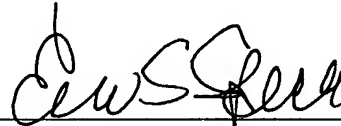
Allowance is requested.

An Information Disclosure Statement is being filed concurrently herewith to bring to the attention of the Patent Office documents cited in the Search Report of 10/25/04 for the corresponding European Application.

Respectfully submitted,

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Date: November 23, 2004

Case CRF D-2425E
B&T Docket No. WONC3001C1